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AUTHOR Ahler, Janet; Perrone, Vito
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ABSTRACT

In collaboration with native speakers, linguists at Mary College in 1973 established the North Dakota Indian Language Studies Program, which has provided native language instruction in three reservation elementary schools, prepared teaching and learning materials, and trained teachers in native language pedagogy. The program was initiated to maintain as much integrity as possible to the cultures of the Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan tribes on the Fort Berthold Reservation. Educational materials included teachers' guides, booklets of traditional tales of the respective tribes, and visual aids. Two of the schools included kindergarten through sixth grades in the language instruction, one served grades K-8. Classes were conducted 15 minutes a day two, four, and five days a week, depending on the school. Some 160 elementary students and 33 college students received language instruction in the program. To evaluate the educational materials and language instruction, interviews were conducted with 50 people, including teachers, school administrators, parents, and students. All five native language teachers found the teaching materials effective, as did the four administrators and 11 of the 12 non-program teachers. All but one of the total respondents indicated they would like to see the native language classes continued; 32 of the 36 teachers, administrators, and parents queried considered the program to be successful. Most of the school personnel believed the classes promoted a postive self-image for the students. Program evaluators found a "tremendous feeling of pride" among the people of the communities that their children were learning the native language. (DS)

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AN EVALUATION REPORT

OF

THE NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES PROGRAM:

IN THE SCHOOLS

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Prepared by

Janet Ahler and Vito Perrone

Center for Teaching and Learning
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, North Dakota

October 1978

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An Introductory Statement

Mary College has long maintained a special relationship with the Ft. Berthold communities; hence, it is not surprising that Mary assumed a leadership role in the development of language programs that would support the aspirations of the Three Tribes (Hidatsa, Arikara and Mandan). Language is basic to a culture. Without it, elements of a particular culture may survive, but it will be lacking in a "soul" and will never have the continuity of meaning for its members that existed when the language was integral to the culture. In order that the cultures of the Three Tribes maintain as much integrity as possible linguists at Mary College in collaboration with native speakers have embarked upon a language program that includes instruction in the schools. It is the latter that we have examined in this evaluation.

We acknowledge at the outset that language instruction in English speaking schools is complex in the best of circumstances. When the schools have a history of Bureau of Indian Affairs control, the complexities are particularly large. But we believe, as does the staff at Mary College, that introducing the native language into the schools is a positive direction, regardless of the complexity of the task. We support the goals of the program and view our evaluation as a constructive activity aimed at improving the quality of Mary's efforts and assisting the National Endowment for the Humanities to gain an external view of the progress of the program.

II

Program Description

The North Dakota Indian Language Studies Program began in 1973 at Mary College in Bismarck, North Dakota. The current focus of the Program involves the three Native American languages spoken on the Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota: Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan. For the past two years the program's goals have been to establish the native language programs in the relevant elementary schools, to prepare the necessary teaching and learning materials for the implementation of the native language classes and to provide for teacher training in native language pedagogy.

During the past school year, 1977-1978, the program directors at Mary College have facilitated the establishment of the Arikara language program at the Whiteshield Elementary School, the Hidatsa language program at the Mandaree Elementary School and the Mandan language program at the Twin Buttes Elementary School. There is presently a trained linguist associated with each of the three languages. In addition, a curriculum specialist with experience in Indian languages has been directly involved in the programs. In order to refine the teaching materials and provide students at the college level experience in the language, Dr. Douglas Park, director of N.D.I.L.S.P., has taught two courses in Arikara.

An impressive list of educational materials has been developed to date. For the Arikara language classes, there are the Arikara Teacher's Guide: Elementary Level which is still undergoing some revision; two booklets, Grasshopper, Ant, and Mosquito Go Hunting (33 pp.) and Young Elk and Long Horned Elk (40 pp.); and a Secondary-Post Secondary guide and workbook which are still incomplete (though used in the college classes). Some visual aids for the Arikara classes have been developed

by the elementary classroom teachers. The Hidatsa language course materials include the Hidatsa Teacher's Guide: Elementary Level and one booklet, Coyote Chief and the Two Blind Men (40 pp.). Materials for the Mandan language course include the Mandan Teacher's Guide: Elementary Level, one booklet, Old Man Coyote Races Buffalo (44 pp.) and visual aids in the form of more than 100 printed drawings and 59 numbers on cards. The four stories in the foregoing booklets are traditional tales of the respective tribes. The teacher's guides are composed of general and specific objectives, lesson plans, and learning activities and vary in length from approximately 120-130 pages.

Other materials which have been developed or are in the final phases of development ar for general use and not just for classroom use. In the process of being published is Earthlodge Tales of the Upper Missouri (124 pp.), a collection of ten Arikara, six Hidatsa, and nine Mandan tales printed in the three respective native languages as well as English. There is also a Writer's Guide for Hidatsa (30 pp.) which is currently being used in the Mandaree community and in the high school. Dictionaries for all three languages will not be completed until the linguistic research is finalized.

Teacher training workshops related to the materials were provided several times over the past school year, 1977-1978. Introductory workshops were held in the summer of 1977 at each of the three communities. A joint workshop for the three language programs combined was held in January 1978. Follow-up workshops were provided in the spring of 1978 for the Whiteshield and Mandaree teachers.

III

Evaluation Procedures

The evaluators' acquaintance with the teaching materials developed by the staff of the North Dakota Indian Language Studies Program began in January, 1977. In the spring, Dr. Ahler was asked to evaluate a proposed 1977-78 Teacher Training Program to be conducted by the staff of the N.D.I.L.S. Program. This evaluation was submitted June 8, 1977. The staff continued to send us up-dated lesson plans as they were developed in the three languages. We were also in periodic contact by telephone with the staff during the school year 1977-1978. In addition, in the spring of 1977, Dr. Ahler attended a lecture by two of the program's linguists held at the University of North Dakota.

Because the evaluators are not trained linguists, the focus of this evaluation is on the implementation of the linguistic teaching materials and the instruction of the three languages in the elementary schools on the Ft. Berthold Reservation. Other aspects of the program have been examined but not to the same extent as the implementation activities in the elementary schools.

Using the Teaching materials, the NEH grant proposals and various earlier evaluations as guides, five interview schedules were designed in April, 1978. These interview schedules included one each for: teachers (those who were actually teaching students one of the three languages and using the N.D.I.L.S.P. materials); school administrators (related superintendents and/or principals); other certified teachers (in the three designated schools); students; and parents (See Appendices A, B, C, D, and E). It should be noted that the interview schedules were based, to some degree, on our experience with other curriculum evaluation activities in North Dakota Indian communities.

In mid-May, a visit was made to interview the staff of N.D.I.L.S.P. at Mary College, Bismarck, North Dakota. At this time, the curriculum specialist supplied information on the background development of the teaching materials and on the particular people involved in the program at each of the three elementary schools. A total of two weeks was then spent on the Ft. Berthold Reservation collecting evaluation data at the three schools.

At Whiteshield where the Arikara language is being taught, the principal evaluator attended a N.D.I.L.S.P. staff-conducted workshop for elementary teachers for a half a day and also attended the college class which was being taught to adults on Wednesday evenings. Interviews with the teachers and the superintendent were conducted during the school day. Several attempts to interview the school principal were unsuccessful. Students were interviewed at random during the lunch hour. The Arikara language teacher assisted in locating parents to interview. The parent interviews were conducted at their place of work, their homes and at a Head Start gathering which many attended.

At Mandaree where the Hidatsa language is being taught, the school year had already ended so that school was not in session during the on-site evaluation. (The year ended one week earlier than scheduled.) The former elementary principal and one of the teachers had already left the area. The new principal, the superintendent, and one teacher were interviewed at the school. All other teachers, the parents and the students were interviewed in their homes.

At Twin Buttes where the Mandan language is being taught, most of the interviews were conducted on the last day of school. The principal had insisted on that day for the interviews. There was a school program for the parents so that it was possible to interview all parties

at the school. However, the festivities of the day tended to interfere with the evaluation activities and only a limited number of parents and students were willing to engage seriously in the interview process.

Evaluation Results: N.D.I.L.S.P. Teachers

There were two teachers of the Arikara language at the Whiteshield School. Neither were certified elementary school teachers; one of them was designated as the director of the Whiteshield language program and the other, an older woman who was a native speaker was designated as a consultant in the native language classroom. Both were considered teacher aides by the school. At Mandaree, there were two teachers involved in the Hidatsa language course. One was a Hidatsa woman who said that she was "still learning the language." She is a certified teacher but for some unexplained reason was employed as a teacher-aide by the school. The other teacher, a non-Native American, was unavailable for an interview. The two Mandan teachers at Twin Buttes were native speakers hired as teacher aides. All except the teacher who was not interviewed were members of the tribe whose language they were teaching.

The Arikara language course began at Whiteshield in October 1977 and serves grades K-8, four days a week, 15 minutes a day. The Hidatsa language course began at Mandaree in September 1977 and serves grades 1-6, five days a week, 15 minutes a day. At Twin Buttes, the Mandan language course began after Christmas vacation in 1977 and serves grades K-6, twice a week, 15 minutes a day. The Whiteshield and Mandaree teachers considered that the time allocated for their classes was sufficient. Both the Twin Buttes teachers believed that their allocated time was insufficient. The teachers reported that 50 students participated in the Whiteshield classes, 60 students in the Mandaree classes and 50 in the Twin Buttes classes. The Whiteshield teachers indicated that all of their students were members of the Arikara tribe. The Mandaree teacher

acknowledged that there were four white students and six students from other tribes, including Navajo and Cree, in her Hidatsa classes. The Twin Buttes teachers estimated that less than half of their students were members of the Mandan tribe. The mixture was not regarded as a problem by the Mandaree and Twin Buttes teachers. The Mandaree and Twin Buttes teachers reported that their students had volunteered for the native language classes, but neither of the Whiteshield teachers was certain how the students were actually enrolled in the language class. All of the teachers suggested that the number of students in their classes represented all who could possibly be enrolled. The Whiteshield director-teacher estimated that only 5% of her students had the opportunity to practice the language with parents or other close relatives. (Judging from parent interview data, this is probably greatly underestimated.) The Mandaree teacher concluded that all except the non-Hidatsa students were able to practice the language at home. The Twin Buttes teachers were unable to make an estimate about the number of children able to practice the language in the home.

All of the teachers had attended training workshops conducted by the N.D.I.L.S. program. The Whiteshield director-teacher had attended three; the native speaker-teacher had attended only the follow-up workshop. The Mandaree teacher had taken part in two workshops (August, 1977 and Spring, 1978), and the Twin Buttes teachers had participated in only one workshop. Every teacher indicated that the workshops were helpful. The two Twin Buttes teachers felt that their training was inadequate to teach the Mandan classes and recommended that additional workshops be made available for them. Although the director-teacher at Whiteshield believed her training for teaching the materials was adequate, she wanted

more preparation in Arikara (she had been learning it for the past three years). The remaining teachers judged their training to be generally adequate.

Only the director-teacher at Whiteshield taught her classes with the aid of a native speaker. She defined her own role as "following the lesson plans and helping the students practice the Arikara words." The native speaker taught new words to the students twice a week. The director-teacher assessed this situation as "satisfactory," but she also felt that she could teach the classes without the aid of a native speaker. The Mandaree teacher described her teaching role as "visiting each classroom and team-teaching with the classroom teacher whose role is mostly passive." The Twin Buttes teachers did not specify their roles in relation to the regular classroom teachers.

All of the native speakers regarded the written language in this program as generally accurate, but all expressed some difficulty with the sound symbols used. Every native speaking teacher had learned previously a different symbol system. The Whiteshield native speaker-teacher learned the symbols that the missionaries used for Arikara in prayer books. The Mandaree teacher stated that she had difficulty only at first because "the church symbols for Hidatsa are different," but that it was easier for her after the workshop. Only the Whiteshield director-teacher had no difficulty with this program's symbols because they are the only ones that she has ever learned. The Mandaree teacher stated that the 5th and 6th graders, the only children at Mandaree learning the sound system, had no difficulty with the sound symbols.

All of the teachers felt that the instructions in the teaching guides were sufficient for teaching the lessons effectively. All of them had implemented the methods and activities suggested in the guide, although the

Twin Buttes teachers indicated that they had "skipped a lot." Every teacher believed that the students had responded favorably to the suggested methods and activities. Some changes in the suggested methods and activities had been made by all of the teachers. The Whiteshield director-teacher had changed the order of the lessons and added stories while the Mandaree teacher created her own games, numbers on flash cards and pictures. Twin Buttes teachers had relied on their own knowledge of the Mandan language for some translation. They all felt that the students had responded favorably to these changes. (The Mandaree teacher suggested, for example, that the students had "learned quicker with the games.") There were no visual aids accompanying the Arikara lessons, but the other teachers had some and found them useful.

The Whiteshield and Mandaree teachers regarded the stories as useful and interesting, and they concluded that the students liked them. The Twin Buttes teachers had not used the stories. The Whiteshield native speaker-teacher related that the "Arikara only tell stories in the fall and winter, but the story books can be used in the spring if they are read in English." The Mandaree teacher added that the students had liked the stories best when they were read in Hidatsa.

Every teacher agreed that the students have learned what they expected them to learn in the native language classes. They all concurred that the native language classes have promoted a positive self-image for their Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan students. The Whiteshield and Mandaree teachers had received favorable reactions from the parents and community members concerning the native language program. The Whiteshield teachers reported that "alot of the adults think that students are doing well," "they hope that it will continue," and "one parent is taking the college class" so she can help her children. The Mandaree teacher related that the "parents had the students use it (Hidatsa) in the Christmas program."

The Whiteshield teachers had meetings with at least one of the N.D.I.L.S. program directors almost every week since the language classes began. The Mandaree teacher had met with the linguist six times and the curriculum specialist twice to discuss the progress of the Hidatsa language classes. The only contact that the Twin Buttes teachers reported was at the one workshop they had attended. The Whiteshield and Mandaree teachers judged the program directors to be helpful in the implementation of their native language classes and they reported that a program director had occasionally observed in their classes. Only the Whiteshield native speaker-teacher and the Mandaree teacher really expected to continue teaching the language class after the program linguists withdraw from the school program. All of the teachers wished that their schools would support a native language course as an on-going part of the school curriculum. The Whiteshield and Mandaree teachers preferred to see such a course as part of the core curriculum, but the Twin Buttes teachers were in favor of the Mandan language classes being elective or part of an enrichment program.

All of these teachers emphasized that it is important to encourage the continued usage of their native languages rather than allow them to become extinct. Every teacher described this language program as generally successful although the Twin Buttes teachers were somewhat reluctant to make a judgment after so short a time. In addition, each teacher offered comments and suggestions:

Whiteshield:

"It should be continued."

"It must continue. Why is it listed as a foreign language?"

Mandaree:

> "It should be continued. The high school should have the course. There should be more story booklets. Maybe they could possibly combine the language program with cultural learning. There should be workshops for parents to learn the new sound symbols--I would encourage parental involvement."

Twin Buttes:

> "There should be more workshops."
>
> "The classes should be longer; we need more older people as aides; and more community involvement."

School Administrators

The administrators interviewed for this evaluation include the superintendent at Whiteshield, the superintendent and recent principal at Mandaree and the principal at Twin Buttes. All, with the exception of the Mandaree elementary principal, were in those positions when the N.D.I.L.S. program was introduced into their schools. The Mandaree principal had been a teacher in the school when it began so she was thoroughly acquainted with the program. Everyone of them was favorably disposed toward having the native language classes in their schools. They all had seen the materials and lessons associated with the program and considered them to be generally adequate for teaching such a course. Two administrators felt that more activities were still necessary. In addition, they suggested additional teacher training for the native speakers. An administrator from each of the three schools had observed in the native language classes and inferred that the majority of students were interested in the lessons. They also described the teachers as doing a competent job of teaching. Even the one administrator who had not observed any of the language classes was confident that the teaching was competent.

Every administrator had participated in meetings with the program directors. The Whiteshield superintendent had conferred with program directors "over a dozen times, whenever problems arose." The two administrators at Mandaree had met with them twice; and the Twin Buttes principal had three meetings with program directors. Each administrator indicated that the program directors had been helpful in the implementation of the native language classes, however, the Twin Buttes principal suggested that more contact--at least once a month--would be more desirable. All of them had attended N.D.I.L.S.P. workshops and found them to be helpful.

Every administrator expected to continue the native language classes after the program linguists end their involvement. All of them expressed the intention to adopt the native language courses as ongoing aspects of their schools' curricula. The Whiteshield superintendent preferred that the native language course be an elective or enrichment course. While the Mandaree superintendent suggested that the course be part of the core curriculum, the Mandaree principal favored it as an elective course. The Twin Buttes principal thought the course should be part of the core curriculum.

Reaction from parents and community members had been conveyed to all of the administrators. It was favorable for all except the Twin Buttes principal who estimated that "75% of them are proud to hear the children using the language (Mandan), but for 25%, there is conflict over which of the three languages should be taught at Twin Buttes." The two Mandaree administrators indicated that "it is needed badly," and "most parents are very glad to have it."

All agreed that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the native languages rather than allow them to become extinct. Each

believed that the native language classes had promoted positive self-images for the Native American students. The Whiteshield and Mandaree administrators regarded the native language program as generally successful. The Twin Buttes principal did not consider the Mandan Language program as "successful" only because of internal school problems. Additional comments and suggestions were offered by each of the administrators.

Whiteshield:

"I wish that it could be funded on a more stable basis."

Mandaree:

"The in-school staff and faculty have done a good job."

"The help we received from the linguists was invaluable. In order to succeed, I feel the program will need continued guidance. Learning to write Hidatsa is taking time and both students and parents will need to become familiar with the sound alphabet [introduced by Mary College] to overcome past experience with efforts to print hymns, etc."

Twin Buttes:

"We need more time for the class."

Other Certified Teachers

Four teachers other than those involved in the N.D.I.L.S. program were interviewed at each of the three schools for a total of twelve. All of these are certified teachers except for one who is a teacher-aide at Mandaree. The majority of these certified teachers are Native American, and most of these are members of the tribes involved in the program. All of the teachers had become acquainted with the language program at a N.D.I.L.S.P. workshop in August, 1977. One teacher at Whiteshield had become involved in the early development of native language courses by writing lessons for a Title VII project in 1974.

Three Whiteshield, two Mandaree, and four Twin Buttes teachers had observed in the native language classes in their respective schools. Two Mandaree and four Twin Buttes teachers had discussed aspects of the native language classes with the teachers of those classes. All twelve of the teachers had seen the native language teaching materials. All four Whiteshield teachers rated the Arikara materials as "GOOD," and all four Twin Buttes teachers rated the Mandan materials as "GOOD." The Mandaree teacher ratings of the Hidatsa materials were varied: one as "EXCELLENT," one as "VERY GOOD," one as "GOOD" (although she had "mixed feelings over the symbol usage and pronunciation"), and one as "POOR." The latter expressed the reason for this low rating as a specific criticism of the "methods" used in the N.D.I.L.S. program. All twelve teachers were supportive of the native languages being taught in their schools.

All four Whiteshield teachers indicated that the native language learning had carried over into their own classes. Three of these teachers had deliberately initiated the carry-over by using Arikara words in their subject areas and by correlating the language activities with their efforts in Arikara culture. The other teacher stated that students in her class initiated the use of Arikara words. Three of the teachers at Mandaree specified some carry-over of the Hidatsa language into their classrooms. This occurred primarily in the first grade classes, particularly in the use of numbers. Three of the Twin Buttes teachers also reported that they initiated some reinforcement of the Mandan language.

All twelve teachers were in favor of continuing the native language classes after this year. However, one Mandaree teacher preferred the selection of a new teacher for the Hidatsa classes, and one Twin Buttes teacher felt that the Mandan classes should be elective rather than required.

All four of the teachers at Whiteshield believed that the Arikara classes had promoted a positive self-image for the Arikara students. Three of the Mandaree teachers indicated the same for the Hidatsa students. The other Mandaree teacher simply stated, "Learning the language has nothing to do with it." The Twin Buttes teachers were reluctant to make a judgment. Three of them felt that it was too soon to know what impact the Mandan language would have on the self-image of the students.

Three of the four teachers at each of the three schools had received reaction from parents or community members concerning the native language program. These teachers made the following comments about the favorable reactions:

Whiteshield:

> "The older people are pleased with how well the students catch on."
>
> "They [the parents] didn't realize how well little children picked up the language."
>
> "Although some parents don't speak Arikara themselves, they feel it is good for their children."

Mandaree:

> "It's very important--it helps parents to practice their own language."
>
> "Most people are in favor of it."

Twin Buttes:

> "The older people like it."
>
> "The older people are proud to have the children learn Mandan."

Two Mandaree teachers reported some unfavorable reactions about the Hidatsa language program:

"Some negative feelings are about pronunciation."

"One father thought that English should be stressed."

All twelve teachers indicated that they would like to see the native language course as an ongoing part of their school's curriculum. Ten were in favor of the native language program offered as an elective or as an enrichment activity. One Mandaree teacher proposed that the course begin as required and later become elective. Similarly, a Twin Buttes teacher suggested that the course be required in elementary school and offered as an elective in high school. All of the teachers believed that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the native language rather than allowing it to become extinct. All four Whiteshield teachers evaluated the Arikara language program as generally successful. Three Mandaree teachers rated the Hidatsa language program similarly, but the other one disagreed with the teaching methods. Three Twin Buttes teachers felt that the Mandan language program was generally successful, and the other stated, "It's difficult to say--a full-time teacher is needed."

Further comments and suggestions included:

Whiteshield:

"It's very valuable and important."

"We need it."

"It should be continued. I would like to learn Arikara myself."

"Comprehension should be stressed over drills in pronunciation. Pronunciation should be drilled with the realization that the accent will be picked up very gradually by adults and very quickly by young children."

Mandaree:

"The children are motivated, but there are pronunciation conflicts to a limited extent."

"I wish that culture could be combined with the language class. We need a workshop for community members and parents."

"We need more interesting materials and more activities."

"The classes should be more than 15 minutes."

Twin Buttes:

"They should have it every day, and it should be more team-taught."

"They need a full-time teacher of Mandan."

"They need more class time and more audio-visual aids."

"The class should be 20 minutes for the younger students, and the classroom teacher should be more involved."

Parents and Community Members

Seven parents, including mothers and fathers, were interviewed at Whiteshield. Three parents and one older female community member at Mandaree were interviewed. At Twin Buttes, three parents and a grandfather were interviewed. A few questions in the interview schedule - those relating to "your child" - were inappropriate for the community members. For this reason, not all questions have a total of fifteen responses. Three of the Whiteshield parents, none of the Mandaree parents, and two Twin Buttes parents reported that they had encouraged their children to enroll in the native language classes. Of those who had not encouraged their children, most were not aware of the language program until after their children were already taking the course. Three Whiteshield and two Mandaree parents thought that the school had decided that their children should be enrolled. One Whiteshield parent had allowed the children to make the decision. One Mandaree father believed that his wife had decided, and one Twin Buttes parent simply did not know.

All of the respondents indicated that a native language class is important for their communities and for their own children. However, one

Twin Buttes parent did not believe that the children used the Mandan language very often outside of class. All felt that children in their communities should be learning their native language in school; although one pessimistic Mandaree parent believed that "they will probably never use it."

Three Whiteshield, four Mandaree, and three Twin Buttes respondents replied that they, their spouses, or their parents were able to speak the relevant native language. Of the four Whiteshield respondents who replied negatively to this qeustion, two claimed to understand much of the language while being unable to speak it. One Twin Buttes parent was an Arikara who spoke Arikara but not Mandan which her children are learning in school.

Fourteen of the fifteen respondents felt, with few reservations, that the children were learning the language properly. One Whiteshield parent admitted that it is "difficult to say what is proper," while the older woman in Mandaree revealed that she "corrects" the teachers sometimes. Everyone specified that the children used the native words at home.

Two respondents from each of the three communities had not heard about or seen the stories associated with the native language program. Of the nine who had, eight believed the stories were generally appropriate for their children to learn; one Twin Buttes parent was unsure of the appropriateness. Nevertheless, there were some qualifications regarding the native stories. One Mandaree father revealed that after June 21 and December 21 (he was not absolutely certain that those were the dates), there were some story-telling taboos. He also conceded that "times have changed," so perhaps the taboos were not important. Another Mandaree parent pointed out that there are some "sacred stories that shouldn't be put in books," and that traditionally stories (and storytelling) must be "paid for." This parent also alluded to seasonal storytelling taboos. A Whiteshield

parent commented positively that there should be more stories.

All of the respondents favored the continuation of the native language classes in their schools, although one Mandaree parent was doubtful about the school continuing the program. All thought that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the native language rather than allowing it to become extinct. All except one Whiteshield parent described this language program as generally successful. The one dissenting parent was critical only in that she felt that "15 minutes is too short for the class--that's not enough exposure to the language."

Additional comments and suggestions included:

Whiteshield:

"The course should be mandatory for all students, especially in high school, rather than French, for example."

"I would like to have it reinforced at each grade level."

"The program has improved--I'm grateful that Arikara is being taught."

"They should have it at all grade levels, every year--even in Head Start."

"It should improve instruction--it helps students to understand the older people."

Mandaree:

"I don't want the language to die."

"They're doing pretty good so far. I would like to see it in high school."

"It should continue."

Twin Buttes:

"The classes should be longer."

"I would like to see it taught more often and on a regular basis."

Students

Among the students interviewed, five were from Whiteshield, six from Mandaree, and three from Twin Buttes. They include boys and girls randomly selected in different age groups and elementary grades. All are Native Americans. Three Whiteshield students claimed to have made the decision to take the native language class themselves; two did not know who made the decision. Five Mandaree students stated that the school had decided that they enroll; one said that it was his own decision. One Twin Buttes student reported that the school made the decision, and two did not know. Five Whiteshield, five Mandaree, and two Twin Buttes students indicated that they like their native language classes. The few who responded to the question, "what do you like best about the class?", commented as follows:

Whiteshield:

"I like the older people telling stories."

"I like talking to the older people."

Mandaree:

"Drawing pictures."

"Talking in Hidatsa."

"Speaking in Hidatsa."

"Talking to classmates in Hidatsa."

"I just like learning Hidatsa."

Twin Buttes:

[None of the three children chose to respond to this question.]

One Mandaree student did not like the class because it was "kind of hard," and a Twin Buttes student claimed that "it's boring."

There was someone in the home of three Whiteshield, six Mandaree, and three Twin Buttes students with whom they could speak the native language.

Of these, two Whiteshield, four Mandaree, and one Twin Buttes students reported they practiced the words that they learned in school with these people. One of the two Whiteshield students who had no one at home with whom to speak claimed that he practiced with a classmate, and the other student did not practice with anyone.

All of the students interviewed claimed that they could understand the native words that their teachers pronounced to them most of the time. All of the students replied that they enjoyed the stories told to them in their native language classes. Included in the comments about what they liked about the stories were: "When the old people tell them." (Whiteshield), "The pictures." (Mandaree), and "They are interesting." (Twin Buttes). Every student except one at Twin Buttes affirmed that they would like to be able to take more classes in the specific language. The one exception "did not know." Further comments included: "It's good." and "I like listening to the stories." (Whiteshield) and "The class should be longer than 15 minutes." (Mandaree).

Additional Observations

The N.D.I.L.S.P. workshop attended for evaluation purposes was held at the Whiteshield School. Those attending included about ten Whiteshield elementary teachers (all except one were Native American), three older Arikara women who were native speakers, the director-teacher, the Arikara program linguist, and the program curriculum specialist. The stated goal of this follow-up workshop was to help teachers to do their own revisions, try out some new lessons, and, generally, to help teachers to assume greater responsibility for the program in preparation for the time that the program directors would no longer be present. The three hour workshop began with an introduction by the program curriculum specialist followed by a sample lesson on nutrition taught by the local director-teacher. With the aid of the native speaker-teacher, she taught us phrases in Arikara concerning eating and drinking. The same method used in the classroom was used here except that the program linguist wrote the words on the board at the close of the lesson.

Because each of the teachers at the workshop taught different grades and subjects, they spent a lot of time exchanging ideas on how to use the Arikara lessons in their own classes. In identifying the greatest problem in the Arikara language, the teachers agreed that it was their own pronunciation. Solutions by the teachers themselves included suggestions that they meet once a week with the native speakers in the program, that they make audio-tapes for use in drill (someone specifically advised using "audio tutorettes"), or that they enroll in the Arikara college class. The chance for students to practice and drill for pronunciation was also emphasized as a problem which could be solved by having tapes. The teachers mentioned the problem of conflict among the older people on correct pronunciation. No real solution for this problem was concluded. Discussion about community support for the Arikara language was an additional priority

of this group. They referred to a needs assessment project four years ago when parents were asked if they would like to see Arikara taught at school. Apparently, many parents then felt that it would be nice, but that there were not enough people to speak it and that it would be better if students learned a modern foreign language. There was a general concensus among the teachers that the community attitude had changed since this new program (N.D.I.L.S.P.) had been implemented and was now favorable toward the Arikara language class. This workshop was considered successful by the evaluator primarily because the participants were actively involved while the program directors were mostly passive. It was also observed that the program linguist had particularly good rapport with the native speakers and the teachers.

The Arikara college class which was also held at the Whiteshield School met for two hours. (There is also an Arikara language course at Mary College which has ten students.) There were about twelve students in attendance on the day of the observation but there are seventeen formally enrolled. The class was composed of at least three native speakers over the age of 50. Most, however, were younger women and one man, all Arikara. The class was again team-taught, this time by the program linguist and by his native speaking informant, an Arikara woman in her eighties. Although most of the words and phrases were spoken by the linguist, the drill technique occurred with the native speaking informant saying the phrase with the class repeating it and later each student repeating it in turn. The linguist would also write the phrase on the blackboard and discuss language structure and grammatical rules. Although occasionally some of the older women would disagree about pronunciation, they would eventually accept that of the native speaking informant. There were also a few comments by the older women regarding the sound symbols used, often referring to the way Arikara was written in their prayer books, but they

seemed willing to learn the new system. There was a high level of interest among all of the students.

In addition, there was a college course in Hidatsa in the spring semester at the University of North Dakota taught by a linguist who had not been involved in the N.D.I.L.S.P. This professor was interviewed using many of the same questions in the N.D.I.L.S.P. teacher interview schedule. The class began in January 1978 and met 3 times a week as a regular university course. All but one of the six students were Hidatsa. The linguistic professor did not speak any Hidatsa before using the early N.D.I.L.S.P. materials, so he employed a native speaker to essentially teach the course. As a professional linguist, he judged the written language in the N.D.I.L.S. program as generally accurate and he experienced no difficulty with the sound symbols used in the program. He and his Hidatsa associate had utilized the pictures developed for use with the lessons and found them helpful. The stories were not used often, but the students initiated discussions about the Hidatsa story-telling taboos and voiced concern about a widespread printing of Hidatsa stories. The professor felt that the Hidatsa class had definitely promoted a positive self-image for each of the Hidatsa students. He expects to teach the Hidatsa course again in the next semester. He emphatically believes that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the language rather than allow it to become extinct.

In several informal discussions, mostly in the homes of parents at Whiteshield and Mandaree, further observations were recorded concerning the story-telling taboos. First, there were at least three incidents where there was disagreement over when exactly the taboos were in effect. Second, there was evidence of people questioning the importance of the taboo in modern times. Finally, some of the people who mentioned the story-telling

taboo were unaware of how and when the traditional stories were used in the native language classes, so they were uncertain whether or not the taboo was being violated.

V

Summary

A total of 50 people were interviewed for this evaluation. There are 160 elementary students and 33 college students receiving instruction in the Arikara, Hidatsa, or Mandan Languages through the North Dakota Indian Language Studies Program. The Whiteshield and Mandaree schools offered the language courses on a regular basis for most of the school year 1977-1978; Twin Buttes began the Mandan course in January. The Mandan language program at Twin Buttes seems to be the weakest because the classes meet fewer times, those involved in the program have had the least training and contact with the program directors and the community is more heterogeneous. Nevertheless, the majority of students receiving instruction in one of the three languages are members of the tribe who speak that language. There was some confusion on the part of those interviewed over the exact way in which the students were enrolled in the classes, though this was not perceived as important to those close to the program. There is at least one native speaker involved in the N.D.I.L.S. program at each school. All of the native language teachers were hired as teacher aides although one of these is a certified teacher. All of the seventeen teachers, including those not directly involved in the program, and the four administrators interviewed had attended at least one N.D.I.L.S.P. workshop and regarded them as helpful.

All five native language teachers found that the teaching materials were effective although they all had made some changes and additions. The four administrators and eleven of the twelve non-program teachers indicated that the N.D.I.L.S.P. materials were effective. Ten of these non-program teachers provided some native language reinforcement in their own classrooms. The three native language teachers who had used

the stories assessed them as useful and interesting. Nine of the fourteen parents who had either heard about or seen the stories felt that they "are appropriate for their children." However, there is evidence that the traditional story-telling taboos create somewhat of a problem. Each of the fourteen students expressed enjoyment of the stories. The four qualified native speaking teachers and the University of North Dakota linguist judged the written language in the N.D.I.L.S. program to be generally accurate, and all but one of the fifteen parents believed that their children were learning the language properly. The one exception was an Arikara mother whose child was learning Mandan. All four native speaking teachers related some difficulty with the sound symbols used but only because they had learned another system earlier. The Whiteshield director-teacher who had been learning Arikara for three years had no difficulty. The Mandaree teacher who had taught some of the sound symbols to fifth and sixth graders claimed that these students had no difficulty. Each of the five native language teachers and the four administrators had met at least twice with N.D.I.L.S. program directors and considered them to be helpful in the implementation of the language classes.

Forty-nine of the total respondents indicated that they would like to see the native language classes continued. The one exception was a student who was not certain. Of all the seventeen teachers and four administrators, fifteen preferred that the native language classes in the elementary school be elective or as enrichment classes. Six were in favor of the native language courses being part of the core curriculum. Eighteen of the teachers and administrators believed that the native language classes had promoted a positive self-image for the Native American students. Of the sixteen teachers and administrators who had received reaction from parents or community members, all reported favorable reactions. Three of them also reported minimal unfavorable reactions.

Page 28 not counted, probably type error.

Of the thirty-six teachers, administrators, and parents who were queried about the importance of encouraging the continued usage of the Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan languages rather than allowing them to become extinct, there was a unanimous belief that their native languages are important and should not be permitted to die. Thirty-two of these thirty-six respondents considered the N.D.I.L.S. program to be generally successful. Even the four who did not, expressed criticism of only specific aspects of the program.

The N.D.I.L.S. program has considerable merit. The teaching materials and classes in the native language help serve the current needs for multicultural education. Schools on or near Indian reservations too often ignore community needs or desires and have, to a large degree, placed considerable emphasis on acculturating these culturally different students to a mainstream American way of life. The N.D.I.L.S. program provides these schools with materials as well as training which can contribute to supporting important community needs and offers a major opportunity for these Native American languages to survive and possibly flourish where they might otherwise have been in danger of extinction. We found a tremendous feeling of pride among the people of these communities that their children were learning the native languages. It is important that this feeling of pride be sustained. It is also apparent that with the necessary funding, the three schools will continue to develop the program so successfully begun by Mary College. The teachers, mostly Native Americans, seem quite capable of expanding and changing the lessons to meet new situations. They are being prepared well for the time when the linguist's work on the languages has been completed. Community interest and involvement can already be considered to be at a high level. The native languages program should definitely be continued.

VI

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based primarily on the data from the fifty interviews of N.D.I.L.S. program teachers, school administrators, other teachers, parents and community members and students. They also reflect additional observations of the workshop, college classes, and informal discussions with teachers, administrators, parents and community members:

1. There should be some effort to include cultural aspects of the three tribes in the native language classes. This would provide more context for the students as they learn the languages.

2. More intensive research should be focused on an investigation of the story-telling taboos in each of the three tribes. Exact dates of taboos and details on story-telling traditions need to be identified before the native language classes can adjust to a suitable situation.

3. An attempt should be made to create modern stories, fictional or non-fictional, about contemporary Ft. Berthold Reservation life which can be translated into the native languages. In addition, local prehistory and tribal histories could be printed in the native languages. These would provide alternatives to the traditional stories now being used.

4. Audio-tapes in the native languages are needed to enable students and teachers to practice pronunciation when not in

the classroom.

5. Perhaps a greater effort to integrate the native languages into other subject-area classes would afford the students and other teachers further opportunity to practice.

6. It might be worthwhile to explore the possibility of offering longer class periods in the native language courses. In the case of the Mandan classes at Twin Buttes, there should be an attempt to offer the classes more often.

7. There should be strong consideration for eventually offering the native language classes in the secondary schools.

8. Workshops especially for parents and community members are necessary to help them become familiar with the sound symbol system used in the N.D.I.L.S. program.

9. An effort to identify the number of Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara people in the Twin Buttes area should be undertaken in order to ascertain if a native language in addition to Mandan could be offered at the school.

Appendix A

EVALUATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES PROGRAM
ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Interview Schedule for School Administrators

Name_____

School_____

Language_____

Date_____

Were you in your present position when this language program was introduced to this school?

YES_____ Were you favorably disposed toward having a SPECIFIC language class in your school?

YES_____

NO_____ Why not?

NO_____ When did you take this position? _____

Have you seen the materials and lessons associated with the program?

NO_____

YES_____ Do you feel that they are adequate for teaching such a language course?

YES_____

NO_____ Why not?

Have you observed any of the SPECIFIC language classes in session?

YES_____ Did you feel that the students were interested?

YES_____

NO_____

Did you feel that the teachers were doing a competent job of teaching?

YES_____

NO_____

NO_____ Do you feel confident that the teacher(s) are doing a competent job of teaching?

YES_____

NO_____

Have you met with any of the program directors from Mary College?

YES_____ With whom?

About how many times since the program was introduced to your school?

_____

NO_____ Have you been in contact with them by phone or mail?

YES_____

NO_____

Would you say that the program directors have been helpful in the implementation of the language class?

YES_____

NO_____ In what ways have they not been helpful?

Have you attended any workshops concerning this language program?

NO_____

YES_____ Did you find that they were helpful?

YES_____

NO_____ Why not?

Do you expect to continue this SPECIFIC language course after the program linguists are no longer involved?

YES_____

NO_____ Why not?

Would you like to have a SPECIFIC language course as an ongoing part of your school curriculum?

YES_____ As an elective or enrichment class ____

OR

As part of the core curriculum____

NO_____ Why not?

Have you received any reaction from the parents or community members concerning this language program?

NO_____

YES_____ Favorable_____

or

Unfavorable___

Elaborate:

Do you think that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the SPECIFIC language rather than allow it to become extinct?

YES_____

NO_____ Why not?

Do you feel that this language class has promoted a positive self-image for the SPECIFIC TRIBE students?

YES_____

NO_____ Why not?

Would you describe this language program as generally successful?

YES_____

NO_____ What needs to be done?

Would you like to make any other comments or suggestions?

Thank you!

Appendix B

EVALUATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES PROGRAM
ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Interview Schedule for Students

Name_____ _____

School_____ _____

Language_____ _____

Date_____ _____

I have been told that you are a student in the SPECIFIC language class and I would like to ask you some questions about that class.

Who decided that you would take this class?

Do you like the SPECIFIC language class?

YES_____ What do you like best about the class?

NO_____ What is it, that you don't like?

Is there anyone in your home with whom you can speak SPECIFIC LANGUAGE?

YES_____ Do you practice the words that you learn in school with that person?

NO_____ Is there anyone who helps you practice the words you learn in school?

NO_____

YES_____ Who is it?

Can you understand the SPECIFIC LANGUAGE words that your teacher pronounces most of the time?

YES_____

NO_____ What do you think the problem is?

Do you enjoy the stories that are told in your SPECIFIC language class?

YES_____ What do you like about them?

NO_____ Why not?

Would you like to be able to take more classes in the SPECIFIC language?

YES_____

NO_____ Why not?

Is there anything in particular that you would like to tell me about your SPECIFIC language class?

Thank You

Appendix C

EVALUATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES PROGRAM
ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Interview Schedule for Parents

Name _____

School _____

Language _____

Date _____

I understand that your child is taking the class in the SPECIFIC language and I would like to ask you a few questions.

Did you encourage your child to enroll in this language class?

YES _____

NO _____ Who decided that your child should be in this class?

Do you think that a SPECIFIC language class is important for this community?

YES _____

NO _____ Why or why not?

Do you believe that learning the SPECIFIC language is important for your child?

YES _____

NO _____ Why or why not?

Do you feel that the children of this community should be learning the SPECIFIC language in school?

YES _____

NO _____ Where should they learn it?

Do you or your spouse (or a close relative) speak the SPECIFIC language?

YES _____

NO _____

Do you feel that your child is learning the language properly?

YES _____

NO _____ What is the problem?

Does your child use the SPECIFIC language words at home?

YES _____

NO _____

Have you heard about or seen the stories which are part of the SPECIFIC language program?

NO _____

YES ____ Do you feel that they are appropriate stories for your child to learn?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Would you like to see the SPECIFIC language class continued in this school?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Do you think that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the SPECIFIC language rather than allow it to become extinct?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Would you describe this language program as generally successful?

YES _____

NO _____ What needs to be done?

Would you like to make any other comments or suggestions?

* Thank you *

Appendix D

EVALUATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES PROGRAM
ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Interview Schedule for Teachers

Name _____

School _____

Language _____

Date _____

Are you a native speaker of the SPECIFIC language?

YES_____

NO _____

Are you a certified teacher?

YES _____

NO _____

Are you a teacher aid?

YES _____

NO _____

When did you begin teaching in the SPECIFIC language program? _____

How often in a week's time does this class meet? _____

For how many minutes a day? _____

Do you believe that this is sufficient time allocated for the class?

YES _____

NO _____

How many students are in your SPECIFIC language class? _____

Are all of the students who are taking the course members of the SPECIFIC tribe?

YES _____

NO _____ What proportion are not?_____

Does this situation present any problems?

NO _____

YES _____In what way?

Did the students in the class volunteer to enroll in it?

YES _____

NO _____ How were they enrolled then?

Does the number of students in your class represent all those who could possibly be enrolled?

YES _____

NO _____ How many more could be enrolled?_____

For what reasons are these other students not enrolled?

About how many of the students in the class have the opportunity to practice the language with parents or other close relatives?_____

Did you attend any workshops to train you to teach this language class?

NO _____

YES ____ How many? _____

Did you find that they were helpful?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Do you feel that you had adequate training to teach this language class?

YES _____

NO _____ What else is needed?

Do you teach this class with the aid of a native speaker from the community?

NO _____

YES ____ How are your respective roles defined?

YOUR ROLE:

NATIVE SPEAKER'S ROLE:

Does this situation seem to work well?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Do you think that you could teach this class without the aid of a native speaker?

YES _____

NO _____

Would you say that you are learning much of the language yourself?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

(Question only for the native speaker)

Do you feel that the written language in this program is generally accurate?

YES _____

NO _____

Have you had any difficulty with the sound symbols used in this language program?

NO _____

YES ____In what way(s)?

Are the sound symbols taught to the students?

NO _____

YES ____Have the students had difficulty with the sound symbols?

NO _____

YES ____ In what ways?

Have you found that the instructions in the teaching guide have been sufficient for teaching the lessons effectively?

YES _____

NO _____ What are the problems?

How can these be eliminated?

Have you implemented the methods and activities which are suggested in the teacher's guide?

YES _____ Have the students responded favorably to these?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Have you made any changes on your own in the methods and activities?

NO _____

YES _____ What are they?

Have the students responded favorably to these?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Have you utilized any of the visual aids which may accompany the lessons?

YES _____ Have you found them useful?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Have you found the stories useful and interesting?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Do you think that the students liked the stories?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Would you say that the students have learned what you expected them to learn in this language class?

YES _____

NO _____Why not?

Do you feel that this language class has promoted a positive self-image for the SPECIFIC TRIBE students?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Have you received any reaction from the parents or community members concerning this language program?

NO _____

YES _____ Favorable _____

Unfavorable ___

Elaborate:

Have you met with any of the program directors during this year to discuss the progress of the language class?

NO _____ Were you supposed to:

YES _____

NO _____

YES _____ How many times? _____ With whom?_____

Have you ever made any suggestions about changes?

NO _____

YES _____

What were they?

Were the changes made?

YES _____

NO _____

Would you say that the program directors have been helpful in the implementation of the language class?

YES _____

NO _____ In what ways have they not been helpful?

Have the program directors observed in your language class?

NO _____

YES _____ How many times? _____

Do you expect to continue teaching the language class after the program linguists are no longer involved?

YES _____

NO _____

Would you like to see this school have a SPECIFIC language course as an ongoing part of the school curriculum?

YES _____ As an elective or enrichment class _____
or
As part of the core curriculum _____

NO _____ Why not?

Do you think that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the SPECIFIC language rather than allow it to become extinct?

YES _____

NO _____ Why not?

Would you describe this language program as generally successful?

YES _____

NO _____ What needs to be done?

Would you like to make any other comments or suggestions?

* Thank you *

Appendix E

EVALUATION OF THE NORTH DAKOTA INDIAN LANGUAGE STUDIES PROGRAM - ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Interview Schedule for Other Certified Teachers

Name _____

School _____

Language _____

Date _____

How did you become familiar with the SPECIFIC language class in your school?

Have you ever observed in the SPECIFIC language class?

YES ____

NO ____

Have you ever discussed the nature of the SPECIFIC language class with the teacher(s) teaching it?

YES ____

NO ____

Have you ever seen the teaching materials that accompany the SPECIFIC language class?

NO ____

YES ___ What would your evaluation of these materials be? Excellent ____

Good ____

Fair ____

Poor ____

Do you approve of the SPECIFIC language being taught at this school?

YES ____

NO ____ Why not?

Have any of your students who are in the SPECIFIC language class carried over their language knowledge in your class?

NO ____

YES ____ In what way(s)?

Would you like to see this SPECIFIC language class continued after this year?

YES ____

NO ____ Why not?

Do you feel that this language class has promoted a positive self-image for the SPECIFIC TRIBE students?

YES ____

NO ____ Why not?

Have you received any reaction from the parents or community members concerning this SPECIFIC language program?

NO ____

YES ____ Favorable ____
or
Unfavorable ____

Elaborate:

Would you like to see a SPECIFIC language course as an ongoing part of your school curriculum?

YES ____ As an elective or enrichment class ____

or

As part of the core curriculum ____

NO ____ Why not?

Do you think that it is important to encourage the continued usage of the SPECIFIC language rather than allow it bo become extinct?

YES ____

NO ____ Why not?

Would you say that the SPECIFIC language program is generally successful?

YES ____

NO ____ Why not?

Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

* Thank You *